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NEW YORK STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
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CORNELL UNIVERSITY

DIVISION OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

ITHACA, N. Y. 14850
January 5, 1970

SECTION OF GENETICS, DEVELOPMENT & PHYSIOLOGY
EMERSON HALL

Professor Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
School of Medicine
Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Josh,

Norman has asked me to take responsibility for the Committee on Public Relations. He has also forwarded to me your note of Nov. 9, 1970. Which of us takes the chair is immaterial.

There are two functions that the Public Relations Committee might serve. One is public relations in the Madison Avenue sense - - the selling of genetics and genetic research to the public and, through the public, to the Congress. I must confess that this aspect does not appeal to me.

The second function is that which in its simplest form would entail speaking out on public issues in the name of the Society. As you probably recall from the early days of Lysenko, however, many geneticists are reluctant to have others speak for them. I propose the following scheme for the effective functioning of the Committee:

1. It announce in GENETICS that it will serve as a clearing house for items of public interest that any member wishes to bring before the Society; those items are to be submitted to the Chairman in writing, 200 words or less.
2. The Committee will screen out any item which in its opinion is inappropriate.
3. The remainder will be printed and inserted loose in GENETICS every three months.
4. Should anyone feel agrieved because his item was discarded, he can challenge the committee at the Annual Business Meeting.

The procedure I have suggested assures that items will be brought to the attention of all members, rather than to that of an elite corps of elder statesmen. No one speaks in the name of the Society but an opportunity is presented for hundreds or thousands of individual voices to be heard. The flyer that is inserted in GENETICS would not be a permanent part of the Journal; GENETICS is used in this case merely for distribution

Wallace, Bruce

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of which is legitimately Society business.

If you are in general agreement with the scheme I have outlined, would you be willing to serve on (or even to chair) the Committee? Is this type of activity one that can gain by an association with our sister societies? Because certain expenses are involved in my proposal, approval of the Board of Directors should be obtained before setting up shop.

Sincerely,

Bruce (by a.m.)

Bruce Wallace
Secretary

BW/am